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ABSTRACT

Dr. Robert Wolverton, former president of the American Classical League, made some proposals for long-range planning activities in support of classical languages, literatures, and courses in the schools, colleges, and universities. In order to implement these proposals there is need at the school level for a broadening of the appeal of classics as an academic subject and a diversification of the ways in which it is approached and presented. In order to begin responding to pressing needs of classroom teachers, the following committees are being set up: Long Range Planning; Classical Humanities in the Elementary Schools; Classical Humanities in the Middle and Secondary Schools; Ancient History in the Secondary Schools; Classics in the Great Cities' Schools; Greek in the Secondary Schools, Methodology; Curriculum Models and Materials; Teacher Training; National Examinations; Outstanding Achievement; Public Relations. The need for coordination of the work of these committees with regional, state, and local classical associations and the need for wide dissemination of the committees' findings and reports through publications, institutes, and workshops, must be emphasized. (Author/CFM)

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CLASSICS AND THE FUTURE: THE SCHOOLS

A PROGRAM FOR ACTION

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Dr. Robert Wolverton's paper, "The Classics and the Future," read at the fall, 1975, meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States and subsequently published in the June, 1976, issue of The Classical Outlook, provided much of the inspiration as well as the title for the present talk. Dr. Wolverton, then president of the American Classical League, called for a "long-range planning and action program," in which classicists would "engage in some long-range planning activities, agreeing upon a statement of mission, establishing some goals and objectives, discovering the many assumptions within which we will have to operate, and setting our priority actions into motion." Dr. Wolverton submitted his paper to the American Philological Association's Committee on the State of Classical Studies, and its chairman, Professor Arthur Robson, requested that he expand upon his essay by outlining the elements of a statement of mission for our profession. This he did in a memorandum which has now been published in the October, 1976, issue of The Classical Outlook. "Our mission," according to Dr. Wolverton, "is to assure the survival and growth of classical languages, literatures, and courses within the school, college, and university curricula." Three specific objectives are listed: 1) "a periodic gathering of data within our field," 2) "the building of a set of assumptions within which our field is now, and will be, operating," and 3) "an ongoing consideration of the values derived from the study of our discipline and how they have impact upon the individual student(s) and society, now and in the future."

Dr. Wolverton's call for planning and coordination of efforts is echoed by Rudy Masciantonio in his recent article in The Classical World, in which he cites adverse effects of the present decentralization of the classical profession and calls for "unification and centralization of resources and effort," within the classical and the foreign language profession as a whole, with increased attention to curriculum reform and public relations. Mr. Masciantonio calls for definite structural and constitutional linkages among the many presently existing classical associations and the establishment of a "national office readily accessible in a large city," just as Dr. Wolverton and others before him had called for a "central office," with an "executive secretary." Most recently, Professor Walter Donlan in a paper delivered at this fall's meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, has called for "a national reorganization (of the classical profession) from top to bottom" that would preserve "the framework of existing structures," yet create a unified community...which with its pooled resources, large membership, and consequent ability to generate national funding will give us the strength to realize our collective potential." Such a reorganization would bring school and college teachers together to "interact mutually and on equal terms..."

Structural changes such as those being proposed by Wolverton, Masciantonio, and Donlan must be based on more than expediency and the dictates of administrative efficiency if they are to prosper. As Dr. Wolverton has pointed out, we must not only ask what is to be done, when, where, how, and by whom it is to be done, but most importantly, why it is to be done. Yet, within our pluralistic society no single answer to this question will suffice. As Dr. Latimer has pointed out, "the new case for the Classics...cannot be made on the basis of one set of values alone, comprehensive as those values may have seemed." A plurality of rationales must

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be admitted, welcomed, and allowed to flourish in any restructuring of our profession that is to take place.

Let me briefly illustrate something of the range of rationales presently being proposed for promotion of the study of the Classics by quoting from papers recently read at professional meetings. At one extreme are those such as Alain Renoir who eschew any appeal to "the practical and the here-and-now," and scoff at "the voice of the high school teacher of Latin and...that of the Professor of Classics, attempting to maintain that the study of Latin will help people with their English: an assertion which, in view of dogma promulgated by the new linguistics that English has nothing to do with Latin and can best be helped by more English, merely reinforces the general conviction that Latinists are as pathetically out of touch with reality as they are superfluous." For Renoir, acquaintance with great works of literature and an awareness of the humanistic tradition are the true goals of all academic foreign language study, which, in Renoir's view, should provide the individual with a "sense of identity with a tradition without which he is condemned to the desperate lot of a nameless and faceless nonentity among the Lonely Crowd." Walter Donlan, taking a Platonizing view, would emphasize the spiritually regenerative power of the proper study of classical antiquity: "For whether we like it or not we are the sole guardians of the ancient heritage of our civilization. This guardianship has been left to us by default -- few others seem interested in it. I mean not only the materia of antiquity but also its essential temper -- that sense of the grandness of the human mind and spirit, a child-like craving to know, a fundamental optimism which sees man as basically good rather than bad, which is intrigued by the possibility of perfection, which regards excellence and order and beauty in all things as the desired norms -- that spirit which has, more than once, breathed new life into our Western Civilization... It is ours to remind our fellow citizens that what they need, and what they have forgotten they need, is that formative sense of excellence, that process of defining and pursuing and loving the good."

George Kennedy sees the appeal of the Classics to contemporary students and the wider reading public as a somewhat different, non-Platonic, yet equally compelling force: "What means most to the modern world are Achilles and Odysseus and Oedipus; Antigone and Dido and Lesbia, the individual soul caught in the circumstances of life, especially as seen in mythology or poetry or art... It is in the experience of individuals in antiquity -- of blacks and women and homosexuals and provincials and cynics and all the life styles and parents and children and lovers -- that we find the closest note of relevance." Others proudly point to the utilitarian values of classical language study, as does Douglas Marshall in commenting on the FLES programs as "a splendid example of adaptation of subject matter to a perceived educational need. They exist not to lead their students to a college classics major but to increase word power and knowledge about another civilization and another period of time. The FLES programs have brought a utility to the study of Latin which it has lacked since the days of the academy..."

Any restructuring of our profession -- no matter how large or how small -- must accommodate this full range of rationales and many more besides, for in reality each of us will give a different answer to Dr. Wolverton's question. Classics is, in fact, a multi-disciplinary subject that must be approached from different directions in different instructional contexts and from which our students will derive a variety of benefits. It is a subject which can and should be tailored to diverse needs of students from the elementary grades through the universities and graduate schools to continuing education programs for older, even senior, citizens. There is no one answer, no single justification; the profession must unite, but it must maintain sufficient flexibility and diversity to answer to a plurality of needs.

At the school level one of our most pressing needs is for a broadening of the appeal of our subject and a skillful diversification of the ways it is approached and presented. We need to communicate to our students a living awareness of our heritage from the ancient world, an understanding of how we have gotten where we are today and of the values and ideals and human experiences embedded in the classical tradition. Latin teaching will surely remain at the core of our school classics programs, but we must also have Greek and a full range of materials taught in translation: ancient history, mythology, Greek and Roman literature in translation, and broad civilization or humanities courses that will treat society, politics, art, religion, philosophy, and moral and ethical thought. We must put together a humanistic area studies package. This is nothing more or less than an invitation to develop at the school level broad classics programs such as have proven to be remarkably successful at the college and university level during the past decade. New classics programs for the schools should be deliberately planned from the beginning along interdisciplinary lines and should take full advantage of the comparative approaches being used in some college level courses in ancient and modern studies. Our discipline is multifold, and our appeal must be, too. The teaching of the ancient languages and the concurrent development of sensitivity to language per se will remain at the center of our activities. We must continue to seek more effective ways to teach Latin and Greek to students of all ranges of background and ability. There will be an increasing demand especially for Latin in the years ahead as we continue to demonstrate that there is indeed no better way to master English than to study Latin. And, we will continue to introduce limited numbers of students at advanced levels to the excitement and beauty of reading the masterworks of ancient literature in their original languages. But, alongside of these courses we need at the school level vigorous programs in the classical humanities that will be linked closely to the language programs but will also be integrated into the total school curriculum. The multi-disciplinary nature of the classical studies program that I am calling for would require the active cooperation and involvement of English teachers, social studies teachers, and even teachers of science and mathematics. It is the values of our civilization and our values as human beings that are the ultimate subject of the broadened classical humanities program, and the Latin or Classics teacher will need to solicit the help of colleagues in other departments in order to open a true dialogue between the past and the present, the ideal and the real, and to succeed in bringing students to the point of intellectual, moral, esthetic, and spiritual awareness at which they can intelligently and critically measure their conceptions of the world, their perceptions, their values, and their goals against those of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

There is little new in the suggestions I am making. Many Latin teachers have already moved in this direction by offering courses in mythology, Greek and Latin literature in translation, and humanities. But, they have often done so of necessity rather than choice, as their Latin enrollments have dwindled and their Latin courses have been cancelled, and they have received little support or guidance from the profession and are sometimes even made to feel that they are outcasts who have failed their profession and are betraying its values by teaching the classics in translation rather than in the original. It is time for the profession to provide systematic and on-going support for those presently teaching classical humanities and those willing and courageous enough to try to reach students through avenues other than the traditional Latin I, II, III, IV sequence. A survey which we are conducting in Massachusetts shows that Latin teachers want to move in this direction but need guidance, syllabi, bibliographies, and help with administrative problems as they try to reach out to offer the classics in new ways to greater numbers of students. In our colleges and universities, we need to produce a new

breed of school teachers who will be trained and fully equipped not only to teach the ancient languages and literatures in the original tongues but also to expand the teaching of classical humanities in the schools and to do so effectively and aggressively.

We are faced, then, with a need for changes in our teacher training programs and for planning, coordination, and structural changes in our professional organizations so that they may more effectively and efficiently answer to the present and future needs of the classroom teacher, and we need strong and coordinated efforts to support, expand, and diversify the teaching of the classics in the schools. Ultimately we may have a national office that could coordinate our efforts and guide us toward our goals, but such an office cannot be created overnight. In the meantime we need action, and we need the involvement and cooperation of school teachers, college and university professors, and the existing classical organizations.

I wish now to speak as the incoming president of the American Classical League and to outline some proposals which will, I believe, begin to answer to the pressing needs for coordination among our professional organizations and for long range planning and action in support of diversified, interdisciplinary, and humanistic classics programs in our schools.

First, we need wide and active participation in a series of working committees that will focus attention on the problems and the challenges that lie before us. As a start, we need the following committees:

Long Range Planning
Classical Humanities in the Elementary Schools
Classical Humanities in the Middle and Secondary Schools
Ancient History in the Secondary Schools
Classics in the Great Cities' Schools
Greek in the Secondary Schools
Methodology
Curriculum Models and Materials
Teacher Training
National Examinations
Outstanding Achievement
Public Relations

Each of these committees would be affiliated with both the American Classical League and with one of the regional, state, or local classical associations. Each committee would be responsible to and would report to both ACL and its other affiliate association, and each would derive support (moral, intellectual, and where possible financial) from both ACL and the other affiliate association. All committees must number both school teachers and college or university professors among their members. To facilitate communication, and to make it possible to meet on a regular or periodic basis, the members of each committee should be within reasonable geographic proximity of one another. The committees would meet in conjunction with the meetings of their local, state, or regional associations. To provide nationwide input and involvement in the work of the committees, each should locate consultants or corresponding members from other areas of the country, hopefully representing each of the regional association divisions. Through these committees we can begin to meet and communicate, to involve both schools (public, private, and parochial) and colleges and universities, to review what has been done in each area by the Airlie House Conference, the Oxford Conference, and the various

regional and state associations, to draw up working papers and reports, to distribute materials to teachers, to serve as clearing houses and resource centers for up-to-date information. And, most importantly, we can begin to formulate practical recommendations for actions to be carried out by the local, state, regional, and national classical, foreign language, and humanities associations. In short, we can begin to answer Dr. Wolverton's questions -- what is to be done, when, where, how, and by whom it is to be done.

The specific charges to each of the committees would be as follows.

Long Range Planning

The objectives of this committee would be those listed in Dr. Wolverton's memorandum published in the October, 1976 Classical Outlook, namely, 1) A periodic gathering of data within our field, 2) the building of a set of assumptions within which our field is now, and will be, operating, and 3) an ongoing consideration of the values derived from the study of our discipline and how they have impact upon the individual student(s) and society, now and in the future. This Long Range Planning Committee should be affiliated with the American Philological Association, and it should have nationwide representation with one member from each regional association.

Classical Humanities in the Elementary Schools

To conduct a thorough review of what has been done in the U.S.A., Canada, and Great Britain in teaching classical languages and classical humanities in the elementary grades. To produce curriculum guides and resource materials for classical studies in the elementary grades, taking into consideration the needs of pupils of all ranges of background and ability.

Classical Humanities in the Middle and Secondary Schools

The charge to this committee would be parallel to that to the Committee on Classical Humanities in the Elementary Schools.

Ancient History in the Secondary Schools

To study innovative, cross-disciplinary and problem-oriented approaches to ancient history at the secondary school level, and to produce curriculum guides and resource materials for courses or units in ancient history.

Classics in the Great Cities' Schools

To make urban school administrators aware of the possibilities and the benefits of classical studies courses in inner city schools. To encourage the introduction of such courses and to help produce suitable materials for new programs.

Greek in the Secondary Schools

To review the materials being used in Philadelphia, the new JACT Greek Project materials being produced in England, and other materials suitable for use in the secondary schools. To explore the possibilities of reintroducing Greek into selected American schools, public and private.

Methodology

To prepare reports on pedagogical topics of broad interest to the profession. Several different methodology committees will be needed. The following would be useful immediately:

A. Latin and Basic Skills. To conduct a thorough, scientific investigation of the hypothesis that linguistic skills gained in the study of Latin may significantly improve a student's knowledge of and ability to use his native English.

B. Individualized Instruction and Behavioral Objectives. To survey the use, advantages, and disadvantages of individualized instruction in classical languages.

C. The Direct Method. To survey the use, advantages, and disadvantages of the direct method (i.e. any method that uses Latin or Greek as the primary vehicle for instruction in the language).

Curriculum Models and Materials

To generate new models for the Latin curriculum and new "tool" materials to supplement existing textbooks. To review existing print and non-print instructional materials and to produce shoppers' guides. To make recommendations to publishers on materials that are needed or should be kept in print. To solicit and evaluate materials produced and used by individual teachers. To channel appropriate materials to the ACL Teaching Materials and Resource Center.

Teacher Training (including re-tooling, re-cycling, supply, demand, certification, standards, placement)

To assess the present situation, make recommendations, and take appropriate actions to assure an adequate supply of properly trained teachers to meet the needs at the elementary and secondary school levels. To consider the availability and need for summer institutes for in-service teachers. To coordinate activities with the ACL Placement Service and the placement services of regional and state classical associations.

National Examinations

To work with the Educational Testing Service on matters of concern to ACL and APA; to work with JCL in devising and administering a national Latin examination; to consider the introduction of examinations in classical humanities.

Outstanding Achievement

To establish mechanisms to identify and appropriately reward outstanding classics students and teachers at all levels. To consider the possibility of recognizing educational administrators and men and women in public life who have significantly advanced the study of the classics in America.

Public Relations

> To make the general public more aware of the value of classical language study through public media of all kinds. To put suitable materials on the teaching of the classics into the hands of decision makers in education on a systematic, on-going basis.

If these committees are to be successful, they must not be left to work in isolation. As suggested above, each committee should solicit consultants in various parts of the country to provide needed input and desirable feedback into the work of the regional associations. But, further channels of communication are needed. Final reports or periodic formal reports of each committee should be made available to the profession in a publication series. There would also be a need for less formal, interim reports and appeals for data and input from all members of the profession. The ACL publication that would serve these purposes could also provide a nationwide forum for regional, state, and local classical organizations. Such a forum would go far toward bringing some order into the present chaotic disarray of classical organizations in the U.S.A. -- first simply by providing everyone with a list of such organizations and a description of their goals and activities and second by providing an on-going channel of communication among all the organizations. These could be the first steps toward more far reaching and productive coordination and cooperation.

The involvement and activity generated by the series of working committees outlined above will lead to an increased production of journal articles on pedagogy in Latin, Greek, classics, and the humanities in the elementary and secondary schools. We need to encourage the writing of scholarly, well documented articles on pedagogy addressed to the needs of school teachers and also of teachers in two-year colleges where general humanities courses are widely taught and to those in the four-year colleges and universities who are teaching elementary and intermediate Greek and Latin courses and courses in classical civilization and the humanities. One way to encourage the writing of such articles would be to create a journal like the British periodical Didaskalos specifically devoted to the teaching of classical languages and classical humanities.

Finally, the committees outlined above should fulfill a further obligation to the profession by participating actively in the annual ACL Institute. The Institute provides an ideal national forum for discussion and debate of the central issues that face our profession and that are to be explored by the committees. It may serve in other ways as well to tie together the various classical associations. The presidents of all classical associations should be invited to serve actively on the program committee for the Institute to assure input on current problems from the local, state, and regional levels. All eligible classical associations should send representatives to ACL Council meetings. All associations should send displays to the Institute so that teachers from all areas of the country may begin to learn what the various associations are and what they are doing.

In addition to the summer Institutes, there should be an ongoing series of summer Workshops sponsored jointly by ACL and the regional associations in rotation, with federal funding being sought whenever possible. Consideration is presently being given to a Workshop for the summer of 1978 in Latin for English teachers, that would provide in-service English teachers with enough Latin and classical background and with the pedagogical skills necessary to incorporate units on the Latin language into their classrooms in an effort to develop and reinforce English language skills. Topics for future Workshops might include "ancient and modern studies" curricula

for the schools, and humanities for English, modern foreign language, social studies, and Latin teachers as preparation for the broadening of the classics programs in the schools that I spoke of earlier.

Other possibilities for action in support of classics in our schools are legion. We must make a start on planning, coordination of professional activities, and active involvement. The American Classical League in cooperation with the American Philological Association, the many regional, state, and local classical associations throughout the country, and foreign language and humanities associations, stands ready to address the problems and face the challenges of the future and to nurture the growth of strong, well-rounded, and interdisciplinary classical curricula in our schools. The time is ripe. We are all being summoned -- back to the basics. We must seize the moment.

--paper delivered at ACTFL meeting
November, 1976